

Rhode Island Charter Public Schools:
2020 Request for Proposals for New Student Seats
Rhode Island Department of Education

Version 4

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For new charter student seats proposing to start opening in:
Fall 2021

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Overview of Rhode Island Charter Schools

In 1995, the Rhode Island General Assembly passed a law permitting teachers and school district personnel to establish new public schools. The law provided these schools some flexibility from district mandates, empowering teachers to innovate around school models and methods of instruction. Several years later, the state legislature amended the law, this time allowing for nonprofit organizations or Rhode Island colleges and universities to establish new public schools again with the goal of encouraging innovation and improvement in student performance. In 2008, another amendment passed enabling “mayoral academies,” a unique type of charter school where mayors establish regional charter schools, with the ultimate goal of improving student outcomes and strengthening communities.

Though Rhode Island’s charter schools have unique qualities, they share characteristics common among charter schools: They are free, independent, nonselective public schools of choice. Charter schools have flexibility and autonomy to devise curricula, choose instructional methods, and develop a mission that best meets the needs of students. The governing boards of charter schools are self-appointing and are typically independent from district governance, policies, and procedures. In exchange for these freedoms, all charter schools must improve student performance, operate a successful organization, and act as responsible stewards of public funds, according to the terms of a charter. Charters are issued by the Rhode Island the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education (the Council) to charter school boards and describe each school’s academic and operational targets, which are the manifestations of the promises charter schools make to students, families, and the state of Rhode Island. Charter Schools are one strategy in a portfolio options to create high-quality seat opportunities for Rhode Island’s students.

Charter schools in Rhode Island currently serve students (about 6.5% of the public school population) in grades K-12. The majority of Rhode Island charter schools are in urban areas, but charter schools exist throughout the state, and enroll student populations as different and diverse as our communities.

Overview of this Request for Proposals

Background:

Rhode Island's Charter School *Request for Proposals for New Student Seats* sets forth the criteria and expectations for applicants wishing to create high quality educational opportunities for Rhode Island's students – either through starting a new charter or expanding an existing charter. The Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) will accept and evaluate all proposals, and recommend to the Council those proposals that are likely to result in high quality educational opportunities. The Council has final authority to approve proposals. Proposals for expansion are treated as a major amendment to an existing charter.

Priorities:

RIDE will prioritize proposals that focus on increasing the number of high-quality education options for students who would have otherwise attended a school identified as in need of [Comprehensive Support and School Improvement](#) and for educationally disadvantaged students: economically-disadvantaged students, differently-abled students, and/or multilingual learners.

Navigating this Document:

To help provide consistency and clarity for charter applicants, RIDE streamlined the authorization process for new and expanding charters into one centralized document. This enables RIDE to provide key information to all applicants, while also differentiating the questions and depth of information needed based on the circumstances of each type of proposal. To help applicants navigate this document, RIDE has broken down the required questions for each proposal narrative section based on three different proposal types:

Proposal Type	Proposal Description
New Charter	A proposal that will result in a brand new charter.
Standard Expansion	A proposal for expansion in total enrollment for an existing charter, less than both 25% of current enrollment and 100 students, with no material changes to the charters' grade levels, enrollment catchment area, nor the addition of a new school.
Material Expansion	A proposal for an expansion for an existing charter that will result in any of the following: a) an increase of enrollment at least 25% of current enrollment or 100 students; b) changes to the charter's grade levels; c) changes to the charter's enrollment catchment area; and/or, d) the addition of at least one new school.

All information required of applicant teams can be found in each section of the proposal narrative. There are sections for new school proposals, standard, and material expansions. Some sections may only require information for a specific charter proposal type (ex: new charter proposals only). Appendix D provides a checklist of sections that are required for each type of proposal. If a question is required for your proposal type but is not directly applicable to your proposal, please explicitly state the reason in your narrative.

Throughout this document, links, and notes are provided to assist applicant teams. Other guidance documents can be found on the RIDE website. These materials do not attempt nor profess to provide guidance on every federal, state, and local law or regulation that is applicable to charter schools. The charter school applicant is responsible for submitting new seat proposals that are in compliance with all appropriate laws and regulations. As teams work to complete new seat proposals, please feel free to reach out to RIDE with questions. These proposal types only differentiate the responses that applicants are required to provide, and does not differentiate the public comment or local impact analysis process. To provide context and set baseline expectations, references and links are provided throughout the application and at the beginning of each section.

References	Description
Required Information	Sections or questions flagged as required information are directly aligned to expectations in regulations and/or statute. Links are provided for applicants to gain more insight into those expectations. All responses are required.
RIDE Recommended	Sections or questions flagged as RIDE recommended are aligned to guidance and frameworks provided by the Rhode Island Department of Education. Links are provided for applicants to gain more insight into RIDE expectations. All responses are required.

Appendices:

RIDE has included the following appendices at the end of this document to assist applicant teams with completing and submitting their proposal.

Appendix	Appendix Description
Appendix A: Required Proposal Narrative Attachments	Provides an overview of all of the attachments required to be provided by each proposal type (New, Standard or Material) in addition to the proposal narrative.
Appendix B: Additional Charter Type Proposal Requirements	Provides an overview of the additional application requirements for each applicant based on the type of charter in the proposal (District, Independent, or Mayoral).
Appendix C: Definition of Terms	Provides a glossary of key terms used through this document.
Appendix D: Charter School Program (CSP) Grant	Provides information on the Federal CSP opportunity through the Rhode Island CSP state entity grant.
Appendix E: RIDE School-Specific Goals Guidance	Provides guidance on the creation of mission-specific academic and organization goals.
Appendix F: Proposal Checklist	Provides an overview of the required sections of the proposal narrative that each applicant must complete based on the proposal type.

Proposal Review Process and Timeline

The proposal review process and timeline consists of four key sections: 1) the application process; 2) public comment; 3) proposal evaluation; and, 4) the Council's consideration. Below is more information on the components and deadlines for each of these process sections.

Application Process

Technical Assistance Sessions (*Spring/Summer 2020*)

RIDE will provide support to prospective applicant teams during scheduled Technical Assistance Sessions. The objective of these Technical Assistance Sessions is to provide clarity and support regarding the application process and criteria. The dates for the sessions will be determined after the release of this application to the RIDE website and will occur no later than a month prior to the submission deadline. Applicants will also have the opportunity to meet with the RIDE team, if attendance at a session is not possible. The RIDE team will work to accommodate all requests, but individual meetings are not guaranteed.

Prospective applicant groups interested in Technical Assistance Sessions must e-mail RICharters@ride.ri.gov to notify them of their interest, and specify topics of interest or questions. RIDE will notify all prospective applicants of when the Technical Assistance Sessions are scheduled, and will post the time, date, and location of these sessions on RIDE's website.

Submission Deadline (*September 28, 2020 12:00 p.m. EST*)

Proposal submissions are due on September 28, 2020. Please see Submission Instructions for more information on how to submit a proposal. Any proposal received after the deadline will not be considered.

Proposals Posted Publicly (*September 29, 2020*)

All complete proposals will be posted to the RIDE webpage. RIDE reserves the right to reject substantially incomplete proposals.

Public Comment Process

Providing Written Public Comment to RIDE (*September 29 – December 1, 2020*)

The public will be invited to provide written public comment on the completed charter proposals once published on RIDE's charter website starting on September 29, 2020, and lasting through December 1, 2020. Comments may be submitted by e-mail to RICharters@ride.ri.gov, by mail to RIDE at 255 Westminster Street Providence, RI 02903 or at public hearings, scheduled by RIDE. The public may also provide public comment at public hearings (see below for more information).

Providing Local Impact Analyses to RIDE (*Rolling, deadline December 1, 2020*)

Any applicant, school district, elected official, government entity, or research institution (including, but not limited to post-secondary institutions) may choose to provide a written local impact analysis statement directly to RIDE on a rolling basis but no later than December 1, 2020. This local impact analysis statement may choose to comment on a proposal's: a) fiscal impact on a city or town; b) programmatic impact on the sending school district; and/or, c) the educational impact on the students in the district. These local impact analysis statements may be submitted by e-mail to RICharters@ride.ri.gov or by mail to RIDE at 255 Westminster Street Providence, RI 02903. There is no specified format for local impact analyses.

Public Posting of Local Impact Analyses (*Rolling*)

For each proposal, RIDE will publicly post available analyses on its website by October 30, 2020. RIDE will post externally developed local impact analyses on a rolling basis. The public may choose to review and incorporate these local impact analyses into their public comments that they provide in written format to RIDE or via public comment hearings.

Public Comment Hearings (*October 15, 2020 – November 20, 2020*)

RIDE will post a schedule for public hearings for each charter proposal no later than October 9, 2020. As required by Rhode Island law, RIDE will conduct at least two (2) public hearings to be held in the community where each proposed charter school is to be located. Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, public hearings may be held virtually.

Proposal Quality Evaluation Process

Overview of Proposal Quality Evaluation (*October 2020*)

In addition to evaluating public comment and the local impact analysis, RIDE will also conduct an evaluation that focuses on the quality of the submitted proposal. For proposals new charter or material expansions RIDE will, consistent with nationally recognized best practices, seek an external evaluator. This review process will include an evaluation of the proposal, capacity review for all applicants and feedback regarding the quality of the proposal against RIDE-established standards. This review will focus on evaluating the quality of the proposal and include an interview.

Capacity Interview (*November 2020*)

All applicants will participate in a capacity interview as part of the proposal quality evaluation process. The capacity interview is an in-person interview designed to yield further detail about the applicants' plan and their capacity to implement the proposal. The capacity interview will focus on standards that the proposal evaluators have identified as not met by the applicant team. To help applicant teams prepare for the capacity interview, RIDE will provide each applicant team a draft proposal quality evaluation at least a week prior to the capacity interview. The capacity interview lasts approximately two hours and includes a performance task for the charter leadership and/or board members. Performance on the capacity interview will be evaluated and included as part of the final quality evaluation.

RIDE will work with each applicant team to schedule the interview as early as possible. For new charter proposals, the proposal's leadership team and founding board members are all expected to participate in the interview. For expansions, the charter's leadership team must invite board members and additional staff as appropriate.

Final Quality Evaluation and Response *(November 2020)*

After the capacity interview, RIDE will update and share with applicants the final proposal quality evaluation. The final proposal quality evaluation will focus solely on the quality of the proposal and is not reflective of the Commissioner's final recommendation, as it does not incorporate an evaluation of the local impact or public comment. Applicant teams will be invited to submit a two-page response to the evaluation addressed to the Commissioner. This response will be reviewed prior to finalizing the Commissioner's recommendation.

Step 4: Recommendation, Vote and Approval

Commissioner's Recommendation *(December 2020)*

The Commissioner recommends for approval those proposals most likely to result in increased expansion of high-quality educational opportunities for Rhode Island's students. The Commissioner's recommendation will be informed by, but not be limited to, RIDE's review of: 1) the quality of the Request for Proposal for New Charter Seats; 2) evidence of community need and support; 3) if applicable, the school's proven track record of achievement and success; 4) the school's operational plan; and 5) the impact on the sending school district(s) and all students, cities, and towns involved. The Commissioner will provide the final recommendation to each applicant prior to making the recommendation public to the Council. Applicants may choose to update and submit their two-page written response based on the Commissioner's final recommendation. This response will be shared with the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education

Council Vote of Approval *(December 2020)*

The Commissioner will bring all proposal recommendations to the Council for consideration. For new charter proposals, an affirmative council vote will serve as preliminary approval. New charter proposals will then enter a readiness period monitored by RIDE and be brought back to the Council for consideration of final approval in Spring 2021. For expansion, an affirmative council vote will serve as the authorization to amend the charter to enable the proposed expansion.

Proposal Submission Instructions:

Required Information: [Charter School Regulations \(200-RICR-20-05-2\)](#)

DEADLINE: September 28, 2020 12:00 p.m. EST

Substantially incomplete proposals or materials received after the deadline will not be considered.

Format: The Proposal for New Seats must apply the following:

- ☐ Double-spaced, 11-point font, with one-inch margins
- ☐ A complete and signed cover sheet
- ☐ A table of contents that references all components of the proposal
- ☐ Page numbers (including on attachments)
- ☐ 75 pages, maximum
 - Excludes cover page, table of contents, and attachments
 - Please use clear, concise language
 - RIDE understands that some proposals will not use all 75 pages as the length and depth of the request will mirror the scale of expansion. For instance, a request to add a grade level at an existing school might differ significantly from a request to add a new school and become a network charter school.
- ☐ Use footnotes for all references and citations. All excerpts must be cited
- ☐ All submissions must be proofread
- ☐ **All complete submissions will be available to the public and posted on the RIDE website.**

Submission:

Any appendices and attachments must be integrated within the bound hard copy and within a single PDF file. *Do not mail or email components separately.* Applications with components received separately will not be considered.

- ☐ one (1) electronic PDF file (with complete and scanned signature page) by the deadline. Late submissions will not be considered. If the PDF is too large to email, cloud sharing will be accepted (DropBox, Google Drive, SharePoint, etc.). The file must be one PDF, with a view of time and date of the last update. Any file updated after the deadline will not be accepted.
- ☐ one (1) original hard copy, bound, with original signatures, postmarked or hand-delivered by the deadline.

Hard copies must be mailed to:

Office of Charter Schools
Rhode Island Department of Education
255 Westminster Street
Providence, RI 02903

PDF files must be emailed to:

RICharters@ride.ri.gov

1.Cover Sheet

Required Information: [Charter School Regulations \(200-RICR-20-05-2\), Section 2.2.2\(D\)](#)

The following cover sheet must be used for all Requests for Proposals for New Student Seats:

Name of Charter: _____ **Charter Type** (District, Mayoral, or Independent): _____

Location of Charter School: _____ **Location of Additional Schools (if applicable):** _____

Enrolling Communities (if statewide, write statewide): _____

Primary Contact Name: _____ **Primary Contact Signature:** _____

Primary Contact Role: _____ **Date:** _____

Address: _____ **Phone:** _____

City/State/Zip: _____ **Email:** _____

Charter	Grade Levels Served	Enrollment	Communities Served
AY20-21 for the current charter (expansions only)			
AY21-22 proposed new or expanded charter			
AY25-26 (5-years) proposed new or expanded charter			
Proposed new or expanded charter at-scale			

Signature of Charter Board Chair: _____ **Print Name:** _____

Organization/Title: _____ **Date:** _____

Name of Establishing Entity: _____

Signature of Establishing Entity Representative: _____ **Print Name:** _____

Position/Title: _____ **Date:** _____

2.Executive Summary

Required Information: [Charter School Regulations \(200-RICR-20-05-2\), Section 2.2.2](#)

About this section:

The executive summary, together with the application cover sheet, must provide an accurate and succinct overview of the proposal. These documents may be shared directly with the press and other stakeholders once the proposal is deemed complete and posted publicly for review and comment. Provide an executive summary, *no more than two pages in length*, which summarizes your charter proposal. The executive summary must not contain new information or content that is otherwise not included in the proposal narrative and attachments.

NEW CHARTER PROPOSALS:

The proposal executive summary must include:

- A mission statement
- A rationale and need for establishing the charter
- The goals of the school
- A summary of what the school ultimately hopes to accomplish
- A description of the individuals who comprise the applicant group
- An overview of the school's educational program
- A description of any unique features of the program and mission-specific areas of focus
- An overview of the school's governance and management structures
- A discussion of teaching at the school, including support and supervision for teachers
- An overview of the organizational plan, including any relationships with organizations that will be major partners or providers such as school districts, charter management organizations, or colleges and universities

BOTH STANDARD AND MATERIAL CHARTER EXPANSIONS:

The proposal executive summary must include:

- An overview and rationale for the requested expansion
- An explanation of how the expansion will support the charter's existing mission statement
- A description of community need and support for the expansion
- A description of the school's past track record of sustained high performance as it relates to the goal of the original charter
- A description of how the expansion will impact or require key changes in the charter's educational program
- A description of the student demand for the requested expansion
- A description of how the charter will adjust its organizational capacity to accommodate the demand
- A description of key financial implications for the charter as a result of the expansion.

3.Mission Statement

Required Information: [Charter School Regulations \(200-RICR-20-05-2\), Section 2.2.2](#)

About this section:

A mission statement must be inspiring yet attainable. Stakeholders who read the mission statement must be able to know if and when the mission is being achieved; progress must be measurable. Abstain from using clichés, jargon, and technical terminology.

A mission statement must clearly and concisely communicate the core purpose of your charter school. It must answer the following questions:

What will your school provide? To whom? How (using what methods)?

NEW CHARTER PROPOSALS:

The proposed mission statement must:

- Identify a mission statement for the proposed school that is meaningful and manageable.
- Provide a brief analysis of the mission statement that discusses the specific words selected to convey the mission.
- Provide an explanation of how stakeholders will know if the mission is being achieved and how progress against the mission will be measured.

STANDARD EXPANSION PROPOSALS:

No information required as standard expansion proposals must not materially change a charter's mission.

MATERIAL EXPANSION PROPOSALS:

The proposal mission statement must:

- Identify and explain changes (if any) to the school's mission statement as a result of the requested expansion.
- Explain how the charter's proposed expansion will support and sustain the school's mission.

4. Proposed New Student Seats & Enrollment

Required Information: [Charter School Regulations \(200-RICR-20-05-2\), Section 2.2.2](#)

About this section:

All charter proposals must result in new student seats that will provide high-quality educational opportunities. In this section, proposals must describe the anticipated student growth as a result of the charter proposal, as well as a compelling rationale for the proposed growth.

NEW CHARTER PROPOSALS:

The charter proposal must:

- Provide a table as an attachment indicating student enrollment expectations for the first charter term and include as many years necessary for the school to reach its maximum proposed enrollment. Include in the table the number of students in each grade by year, and by school site (if more than one). If the proposed expansion results in a network charter or the expansion of a network charter, then a table must be included for at least: a) the entire network charter; and b) each individual network charter school affected by the expansion.

Please see a sample enrollment table below:

School Year	Grade Levels Served	Total Enrollment	School Districts
2021/22			
2022/23			
2023/24			
2024/25			
2025/26			
(Indicate year when charter is at scale)			

- Provide a clear rationale for the school's growth plan that contemplates the benefits and challenges of enrolling more or less students per year.
 - Explain in detail the rationale for selecting this particular school size.
 - Discuss assumptions regarding student attrition and the school's plan to replace students if/when spots are vacated.
 - Discuss assumptions about proposed enrolling districts, as applicable.
- Summarize the school recruitment process and explain how the school and its program will be publicized and marketed throughout the community to a broad cross-section of prospective students including to families traditionally less informed about school options.
- Describe an enrollment process that includes a plan for a public lottery, including any weights or special design considerations, and is open, fair, and in accordance with the charter school statute and regulations, Charter School Regulations (200-RICR-20-05-2), Section 2.6.2(A). Applicants should consider whether a variance is needed to any proposed lottery weights.

MATERIAL AND STANDARD EXPANSION PROPOSALS:

The charter proposal must:

- Provide a description of the charter school's expansion plan. This description must include an overview and timeline for the following, as applicable:
 - Total enrollment
 - Grades served
 - Addition of a school district(s) to the catchment area; and/or
 - Additional schools within a charter school network.
- Provide a rationale for why the charter school is requesting the above expansion. This rationale must include, but not be limited to:
 - Why the charter school is requesting this particular school size; and
 - Why the charter school is requesting the expansion at this specific moment in time.
- Provide a description of the target student population for the expansion and how the requested expansion will enable the charter school to better serve educationally disadvantaged students ([Charter School Regulations \(200-RICR-20-05-2\), Section 2.2.4 \(F\)](#)).
- Include an enrollment table, as an attachment, that reflects the requested expansion.
 - The enrollment table must start with the first school year and include as many years as necessary for the school to reach its maximum proposed enrollment.
 - The enrollment table must include: grades levels served, total enrollment, and school districts served.
 - If the proposed expansion results in a network charter or the expansion of a network charter, then a table must be included for at least: a) the entire network charter; and b) each individual network charter school affected by the expansion.

Please see a sample enrollment table below:

School Year	Grade Levels Served	Total Enrollment	School Districts
2021/22			
2022/23			
2023/24			
2024/25			
2025/26			
(Indicate year when charter is at scale)			

REQUIRED ATTACHMENT (all types): An enrollment table as described above.

5.Goals

Required Information: [Charter School Regulations \(200-RICR-20-05-2\), Section 2.2.2 and 2.2.4\(B\)](#)

About this section:

Goals are the manifestation of the promises a charter school makes to students, families, and the state of Rhode Island. In this section, applicants will describe the goals of the proposed charter school. As part of the [charter performance framework](#), schools may choose to include school-specific goals for new and existing charters. Each goal must indicate a specific target to be met, using a specific metric within a certain time period.

Charter schools in Rhode Island are held to common measures of academic, financial and organizational performance. Specifically:

- Student Academic Performance
- Financial Viability and Sustainability
- Organizational Quality
- Legal and Regulatory Compliance

The primary indicator of charter performance places academic performance at the forefront of evaluating charter school performance, while the sustainability indicators ensure that the charter school possesses strong infrastructure and systems to continue to provide a quality education to Rhode Island's students. Rhode Island's statewide accountability system forms the basis of student academic performance evaluation and applicants must demonstrate an understanding of how schools in Rhode Island are measured and held accountable.

NEW CHARTER PROPOSALS:

The proposed goals must:

- Provide **at least three** goals that may be used to assess academic progress of students. One goal must be based on outcomes related to the current statewide accountability system. Two additional academic goals must enable a deeper understanding of academic progress in core areas, and/or in subjects not currently tested using statewide assessments, and/or in grade levels not currently assessed using statewide assessments.
- Provide **at least two** goals that may be used to evaluate the *mission* of the proposed school (e.g. college course completion, progress relative to established competency standards, industry certifications, language acquisition, completion of portfolios, completion of artistic projects, etc.).
- Provide **at least two** additional goals that may be used to evaluate the *organizational strength* of the proposed school.
- Provide any additional goals or targets the applicants wish to propose to evaluate performance of the proposed school.

If issued preliminary approval, school representatives and RIDE will meet to develop a Final Charter prior to final approval. At that point in time, RIDE and the school will work together to determine if the school wishes to formally include school-specific goals as part of the charter performance framework. RIDE provides guidance on the creation and approval of school-specific goals that are specific and measurable, attached as appendix E.

STANDARD EXPANSION PROPOSALS:

This section must include:

- Describe the charter school's current progress towards successfully meeting the charter's goals.
- For each goal that the charter school is not on track to meet, describe the strategy(ies) that the school has implemented to address the respective deficiency. Please provide a rationale for why the charter school selected this strategy(ies) and the respective results so far.

MATERIAL EXPANSION PROPOSALS:

This section must include:

- Describe the charter school's current progress towards successfully meeting the charter's goals.
- Reflect upon the underlying factors that have contributed towards the charter school's current progress (both positive and negative) towards meeting their goals.
- For each goal that the charter school is not on track to meet, describe the strategy(ies) that the school has implemented to address the respective deficiency. Please provide a rationale for why the charter school selected this strategy(ies) and the respective results so far.
- Describe how the requested expansion will impact the charter school's goals. This description may include a proposed updating of charter goals that reflects the scale of the requested expansion. (For example, schools expanding to additional grades may require updated or new goals, while schools simply increasing enrollment in an existing grade level may need no revision of their goals.)

6. Community Need and Support

Required Information: [Charter School Regulations \(200-RICR-20-05-2\), Section 2.2.2\(D\)](#)

About this section:

This section must communicate why the applicants are proposing to open new charter school seats for this particular community or communities, and how the school will become a part of the wider community. Applicants proposing enrollment areas not tied to city or district boundaries (e.g. statewide catchment area, virtual programs, etc.) must still consider how the following prompts apply to the school structure they are proposing.

All proposals must provide evidence of community support as an attachment. Evidence of community support may include, but is not limited to: letters of support from community stakeholders, evidence of parent demand for the requested expansion, and official written support by the town or city Councils from sending districts (as required by RIGL § 16-77-5.1.c).

NEW CHARTER PROPOSALS:

The proposal's community need and support must include:

- A demographic and geographic description of the community or communities from which the proposed school intends to draw students.
- A description of the target student population, especially in the context of the priority to serve educationally disadvantaged students.
- A specific rationale for selecting this particular community, and highlight how the proposed school will enhance or expand opportunities already available within this community. Strong responses will go beyond an analysis of state test scores or a general argument for school choice.
- A discussion of the degree to which the applicant group has consulted with community members, including the strategies used to solicit community input regarding the educational and programmatic needs of students.
- A description of the extent to which community members will continue to be engaged during future planning and operations of the school, and the nature and extent of any ongoing involvement in the governance and/or operations of the school.
- A description of the extent to which community partners or relationships will create opportunities for students and support the mission and success of the school.

STANDARD EXPANSION PROPOSALS:

The proposal's community need and support must include:

- A description of how the proposed expansion will help support each respective community.
- A discussion of the degree to which the charter school has engaged community members regarding the proposed expansion.

MATERIAL EXPANSION PROPOSALS:

The proposal's community need and support must include:

- A description of how the proposed expansion will help support each respective community that the charter serves.
- An explanation of the degree to which the charter school has engaged community members regarding the proposed expansion.
- A description of how community members are currently involved in the existing school and how that involvement will be sustained upon expansion. This description must include the nature and extent of any ongoing community involvement in the governance and/or operations of the school.

REQUIRED ATTACHMENT (all types):

Evidence of Community support and official written support by the town or city Councils from sending districts (as required by RIGL § 16-77-5.1.c). See Appendix B., for requirement details for proposed District, Independent and Mayoral charters.

If official written support is not available, per 16-77-5.1 (f), a proposed charter, or amendment to a charter for expansion, may proceed through the approval process by removing districts that have not provided written support from the catchment area and may be approved with the remaining districts in the catchment area, provided that the application satisfies the requirements of regulations and law.

7.Educational Program (New Charter Proposals)

Required Information: [Charter School Regulations \(200-RICR-20-05-2\), Section 2.2.2](#)

About this section:

A clear and focused vision for an educational program is crucial to the success of a charter school proposal. Responses to the following prompts must inspire confidence and describe how your educational program will serve the needs of all students. RIDE recognizes that the educational program submitted for a new charter proposal will substantially differ from existing charters with a track record of academic performance. This section pertains specifically to new charter proposals. Following sections will apply specifically to expansion proposals.

NEW CHARTER PROPOSALS:

The educational program must include:

7(A). Guiding Principles

A charter school's guiding principles must define a set of core beliefs and values that forms the basis for the rest of the program, including the pedagogical approach, curriculum decisions, assessment practices, school culture, and academic and organizational goal-setting. The principles must be informed by research, experience, and proven practice.

- List the guiding principles of the charter school.
- Define or clearly explain each of the guiding principles. Discuss the research and experiences that have informed the formation of these guiding principles.
- Include examples of how each principle will translate into actions and decisions at your proposed school.
- Provide examples of role models—schools, programs, or individuals—who are succeeding using related principles under similar conditions.

7(B). Curriculum and Coursework

Rhode Island's charter schools have the freedom to choose and/or develop curricula and courses of study that best serve the diverse needs of the student population and reflect the mission of the school. In this section, reviewers must be provided with a comprehensive sense of the breadth and depth of the program, including how curriculum and coursework will align across grade levels. Regardless of whether the curriculum is purchased, previously developed, or internally developed, it must be clear that it will be aligned with [Common Core Standards](#) and other standards adopted by the state of Rhode Island, such as the [Next Generation Science Standards](#).

- Include why, given the proposed mission of the school, this curriculum was selected.

REQUIRED ATTACHMENT: Demonstrate how the proposed curriculum and coursework will meet state standards. Ideally, in a table organized by grade level, outline the course of study/ course offerings at the school. Include core academic subjects, specials, electives, alternative, and other coursework. Identify the Common Core Standards that each course would address.

Provide a narrative that further explains the course of study and curriculum at the school and demonstrate how the curriculum will be aligned to Common Core Standards. Include sufficient detail in areas of study that are specific to the mission of the school (e.g. engineering, arts, etc.). If decisions have not yet been made in certain areas of the curriculum, please explain how decisions will be made at a later date.

- Make a strong case in support of the curriculum. What research, experiences, and best practices support this curricular plan? Be sure to underscore how the course of study expands upon or enhances what is currently available to students.
- Note which standards are guiding decisions around curriculum, and provide an assurance that curriculum will align with appropriate standards.
- Describe how the school will manage the development, evaluation and refinement of curriculum over time.

7(C). Learning Environment and Pedagogy

Explain how specific instructional methods will ensure that the school's academic program is accessible and appropriate for all students at all levels. Focus on the target student community. Be sure to specify how these instructional practices will work to close performance gaps.

- Describe examples of classroom environments for students at the proposed school. Include details around class size, class structure and classroom layout, differentiated by grade or subject as applicable.
 - Please explain why the specific classroom environment decisions were decided, how do the classroom layout, structure and size align to the proposed mission?
- Describe several instructional methods and techniques that will be used to deliver the curriculum. Specify which instructional methods would remain consistent across subjects or across grade levels. Alternatively, discuss how instructional methods might differ by subject or as students grow.
 - Please explain why the specific instructional methods and techniques were chosen, how do the techniques align to the proposed mission?
- Make a case in support of these instructional methods. How will these methods work to accelerate student achievement? What research, experiences, and best practices support these decisions?

7(D). Specific Populations

Charter schools are nonselective public schools and must be prepared to enroll and serve all students, including struggling students, gifted students, differently-abled, multilingual learners, and students with other diverse learning needs.

The general education classroom needs to be an environment which is responsive to the educational needs of all children. A continuum of services must also be available through the school so that all students can participate fully in the educational program and mission of the school. This section of the application must describe the school's programs and services, and how they will be implemented within the context of the proposed school. The applicant must consider the stated target population and

priority to serve educationally disadvantaged students, differently-abled, or limited English proficient students (also referred to as multilingual learners, English learners or English language learners).

1. For students struggling academically and behaviorally:

- Describe how the proposed school will define and identify which students are struggling.
- Describe the intervention strategies that will be used for struggling students.

2. For students learning English (Multilingual Learners):

- Describe how the proposed mission and school program will ensure the requirements for supporting students learning English are met, at a minimum and in accordance with [Regulations Governing the Education of English Language Learners \(200-RICR-20-30-3\)](#).
 - Describe the procedures that the proposed school will use to identify students who are learning English.
- Discuss the Multilingual Learner (MLL) instructional program that the school will employ for its MLLs, examples of its effectiveness, and/or the research base that supports it. Explain when and where MLL services will be provided, within the confines of the schedule.
 - Include an example of an intervention strategy and the process the school will rely on to determine its effectiveness.

3. For students with identified disabilities (Differently-abled students):

- Describe how the proposed mission and school program will ensure the requirements for supporting students with identified disabilities are met, in accordance with [Regulations Governing the Education of Children with Disabilities](#).
 - Discuss the instructional program for differently-abled students that the school will employ, examples of its effectiveness, and/or the research base that supports it.
 - Explain when and where services will be provided, within the confines of the schedule.
- Describe procedures that the proposed school will use to identify differently-abled students. Be sure to address how the school will ensure students are not inappropriately diagnosed.

4. For gifted or advanced students:

- Provide a clear rationale for how the school will define and identify students as gifted or advanced.
- Describe resources, methods, and services (including personnel) that will be provided to gifted or advanced students. Include research and other evidence that support this approach.

7(E). Assessment System

Charter schools are expected to develop a comprehensive assessment system. A comprehensive assessment system will include (but must not be limited to) state assessments, and serves as a structure for how teachers and administrators will measure what students know and are able to do from attending your school. A comprehensive assessment system must measure the academic progress of individual students, cohorts of students over time, and the school as a whole, and will provide information to a variety of stakeholders about whether the school is an academic success. Provide a narrative that:

- Discusses several of the questions the school will seek to answer or track progress through its assessment system.
- Describes the types of assessments that will be used at the school. Organize the discussion by content area and grade level.
- Discusses the process by which assessment results will be analyzed to drive curriculum and instruction.

7(F). Promotion and Graduation Policy

Provide a narrative that:

- Explains the proposed standards for promoting students from one grade to the next. Include in the description any provisions related to retention of students. For high schools, include any school-specific graduation requirements. Ensure that graduation requirements align to the [Rhode Island High School Graduation Requirements](#).
- Addresses how the school will inform parents about promotion and graduation decisions.

7(G). School Culture

This subsection prompts applicants to describe what will foster and maintain a healthy school culture and environment for the benefit of the whole school community. It also asks applicants to discuss the character skills and behaviors that will be valued at the school. This subsection aligns to the Rhode Island [Charter School Performance Framework](#) and must:

- Include a compelling description of the culture at the school, and how the culture and climate of the school is related to student outcomes and expectations.
 - Discuss the school culture strategies that will address student attendance issues.
 - Include a description of the plan to engage parent and families in the school culture.
 - Include a plan that encourages high retention rates, particularly in grades where attrition is not typical.
- Provide a description of the strategies that will be used to establish the desired school culture and/or climate, including the research, experiences, and other evidence that informs these decisions.
- Provide plans for maintaining a safe and orderly environment, including behavior management and discipline procedures. These plans must be supported by research and evidence from experience and best practices.
 - Describe how the selected behavior management system and discipline procedures align to the proposed mission of the school.
- Provide an assurance that the applicants will craft a comprehensive discipline policy in compliance with all federal, state and local laws and regulations, including a general discipline policy and a differently-abled student discipline policy.

7. Educational Program (Expansion Proposals)

RIDE Recommended: See Appendix C for Definition of “track record of academic performance.”

About this section:

A clear and focused vision for an educational program is crucial to the success of a charter school proposal. Responses to the following prompts must inspire confidence and describe how your educational program has served the needs of all students. RIDE recognizes that the educational program submitted for a new charter proposal will substantially differ from existing charters with a track record of academic performance. This section pertains specifically to charter expansion proposals. The previous section pertains specifically to new charter proposals.

About track records of academic performance:

Schools seeking to expand their charter must have a clear track record of successfully providing quality educational opportunities to their students. RIDE will review all available data to evaluate whether not a charter has a clear track record of success. This evidence will definitively include an analysis of the charter’s performance on the statewide accountability system. A clear track record must not include any significant deficiencies in student performance on the statewide accountability or charter school performance review systems.

In addition, charters may provide additional evidence of performance against school specific goals to support the statewide accountability system results in determining whether a school has a track record of success. While RIDE will review all available data in evaluating a school’s track record, RIDE will heavily consider the most recent year of student achievement data as the clearest indicator of a school’s current ability to provide future quality educational opportunities.

STANDARD EXPANSION PROPOSALS:

Proposals for charter expansion must:

- Describe the charter school’s proven track record of sustained high performance that provides confidence that, when taking the requested expansion into account, the school will be able to meet its proposed academic goals.
 - The description must combine performance data with a clear explanation that indicates that the charter school will sustain its track record of high performance throughout the proposed expansion.
 - This description must include, at a minimum, an analysis of reading and math proficiency data from state assessments, as well as progress from internal assessment data.
 - Charter schools that are part of a national charter management organization must include the track record from their Rhode Island schools, but may also include the track record of performance from the entire charter management organization.
- Identify and describe the specific practices of the charter school that have enabled it to sustain high academic achievement. This description must include how the charter school will

ensure that key elements of the program are kept intact and/or strengthened for all students as it expands. Charter schools must consider:

- Providing a detailed examination of the school's guiding principles, pedagogy, and other practices to date, and a compelling rationale for why the charter seeking an expansion believes these practices have yielded strong student outcomes.
- Including a detailed description of how the school will continue to implement and build upon these practices with all new and existing students.

MATERIAL EXPANSION PROPOSALS:

Proposals for charter expansion must:

- Describe the charter school's proven track record of sustained high performance that provides confidence that, when taking the requested expansion into account, the school will be able to meet its proposed academic goals.
 - The description must combine performance data with a compelling narrative that indicates that the charter school will sustain its track record of high performance throughout the proposed expansion.
 - This description must include, at a minimum, an analysis of reading and math proficiency data from state assessments, as well as progress from internal assessment data.
 - Charter schools that are part of a national charter management organization must include the track record from their Rhode Island schools, but may also include the track record of performance from the entire charter management organization.
- Identify and describe the specific practices of the charter school that have enabled it to sustain high academic achievement. This description must include how the charter school will ensure that key elements of the program are kept intact and/or strengthened for all students as it expands. Charter schools must consider:
 - Providing a detailed examination of the school's guiding principles, pedagogy, and other practices to date, and a compelling rationale for why the charter seeking an expansion believes these practices have yielded strong student outcomes.
 - Including a detailed description of how the school will continue to implement and build upon these practices with all new and existing students.
- Identify and describe how the requested expansion will result in substantial changes for each of the following categories:

Category:	Requirement: Charter School Regulations (200-RICR-20-05-2), Section 2.2.2
Guiding Principles	<p>Identify and describe any changes to the set of core beliefs and values that forms the basis for the rest of the program, including the pedagogical approach, curriculum decisions, assessment practices, school culture, and academic and organizational goal-setting. The principles must be informed by research, experience, and proven practice.</p> <p>For each new principle, include examples of how each principle will translate into actions and decisions at your proposed school.</p>

Curriculum and Coursework	<p>In a table organized by each new grade level, outline the course of study/ course offerings at the school. Include core academic subjects as well as special, elective, alternative, and other coursework.</p> <p>Provide a narrative that further explains the course of study and curriculum at the school. Include sufficient detail in areas of study that are specific to the mission of the school (for example, engineering, arts, etc.). If decisions have not yet been made in certain areas of the curriculum, please explain how decisions will be made at a later date.</p> <p>Describe how the school will manage the development, evaluation, and refinement of curriculum over time.</p>
Learning Environment and Pedagogy	<p>Describe how any changes to the charter school's learning environment and pedagogy for the new proposed grades will ensure that your academic program is accessible and appropriate for all students at all levels. Changes may include, but are not limited to, classroom environment/structure and instructional methods/techniques.</p> <p>If decisions have not yet been made in certain areas of the learning environment and pedagogy for certain grades, please explain how decisions will be made at a later date.</p>
Specific Populations	<p>Describe any changes to the charter school's approach, for the new proposed grade levels, to identifying and serving: struggling students; multilingual learners; differently-abled students; and gifted or advanced students.</p>
Assessment System	<p>Describe any changes to the charter school's comprehensive assessment system for the new proposed grade levels. This description must include the type of assessments that will be used by the school for the new grade levels, organized by content area.</p> <p>If decisions have not yet been made in certain areas of the comprehensive assessment system for certain grades, please explain how decisions will be made at a later date.</p>
Promotion and Graduation Policy	<p>Describe any changes to the charter school's promotion and graduation policy for the new proposed grade levels. For schools expanding into high schools for the first time, include any school-specific graduation requirements.</p> <p>If decisions have not yet been made in certain areas of the school's promotion and graduation policy for certain grades, please explain how decisions will be made at a later date.</p>
School Culture	<p>Describe any changes to the charter school's strategies to foster and maintain a healthy school culture. These changes may include, but are not limited to, behavior management and discipline procedures. For each change, provide a description of the strategy that will be used to establish the desired school culture and/or climate, including the research, experiences, and other evidence that informs these decisions.</p> <p>If decisions have not yet been made in certain areas of school culture for certain grades, please explain how decisions will be made at a later date.</p>

8. Organizational Capacity (New Charter Proposals)

Required Information: [Rhode Island General Law Title 16, Chapter 77.2, 77.3 or 77.4](#) and [Charter School Regulations \(200-RICR-20-05-2\), Section 2.2.2 \(D\) and \(E\)](#)

About this section:

Charter Schools must consider the necessary strategies and potential impact for governance and personnel to ensure that they may successfully implement their educational plan. RIDE recognizes that the organizational capacity needs differ for new charter proposals compared to expansions of existing charters. Therefore, the following section focuses specifically on new charter proposals. The subsequent will follow dedicated for expansions.

NEW CHARTER PROPOSALS:

New charter proposals must address the following information in their proposal:

8(A): Establishing Persons or Entities

Only certain persons or entities are eligible to establish charter schools in Rhode Island, as identified in [RIGL § 16-77.2-1, 16-77.3-1, or 16-77.4-1](#). Please provide information on the person or entity that is establishing this charter school. Ensure the establishing entity aligns with the requirements of law.

Proposals are required to:

- Discuss the mission of the establishing person or entity and how their mission aligns with that of the applicant group.
- Describe any affiliations between members of the applicant group and the establishing person or entity (e.g. prior or current employment, family member, membership on board of trustees).
- Describe the ongoing role, if any, the establishing person or entity will play if the school is approved. Depending on whether the proposal is a district, independent or mayoral charter, Rhode Island General Law requires partnership with an establishing entity for any approved new charter.

REQUIRED: Signature from person or representative of applicable establishing entity on Application Cover Page.

8(B): Applicant Group

Strong, successful applicant groups are diverse in background and experience. Strong applicant groups must exemplify the core competencies, skills, and levels of experience required to successfully start and operate a charter school. If the proposed school has a unique mission, or is proposing to create a specialized program, the applicant group must clearly reflect an ability to fulfill that mission or program. All members of the applicant group will be expected to participate in a capacity interview as a part of the proposal review process. This section must include:

- Provide a list of individuals that comprise the applicant group, along with brief biographical descriptions.

- Describe how the applicant group was formed.
- Describe each applicant group member's role in crafting the proposal, and the role each intends to fill, if any, in the school if approved.

REQUIRED: Signature of lead applicant group member on Application Cover Page

REQUIRED ATTACHMENT: Résumés for all members of the applicant group.

VIII(c): Board Development and Duties

Charter school boards must be equipped to oversee the academic performance of the school and ensure organizational sustainability, including oversight and management of public funds. Charter school boards must be comprised of individuals who have the background and skills to handle decisions on a range of issues, all of which impact the success of the charter school. In return, charter school boards have the autonomy to govern new innovative public schools that change the way students are educated in Rhode Island.

RIGL § 16-2-9 describes the general powers and duties of Rhode Island school committees. Charter school boards share many of these responsibilities. They must comply with the requirements of RI Open Meetings Law (16-42-46) and the regulations of the RI Ethics Commission. Responses must address each of the following:

- Provide an assurance that the board will comply with all applicable laws and regulations.
- Describe a process for board member recruitment, review, and election to the charter school board that acknowledges the skills required to successfully govern a charter school.
- As an attachment, provide a table that includes a list of board positions, the individuals who have committed to serving on the school's board, and the position or role they intend to play. In places where board positions have not yet been filled, please write "vacant" and describe what type of person would best fit that position (e.g. parent, legal expert, etc.)
- Discuss any affiliations between proposed board members and persons or entities establishing the school, comprehensive management providers or partners, other contractors or consultants who may provide services to the proposed school and each other.
- Describe the process by which the board will oversee academic performance.
- Describe the process by which the board will oversee school finances.
- Describe the process by which the board will hire a school leader.
- Describe the process by which the board will hold school leader(s) accountable.
- Describe the process by which teachers and parents can challenge decisions of the board.

REQUIRED ATTACHMENT: draft bylaws

REQUIRED ATTACHMENT: table with a list of board positions, individuals, and roles as described above. For Mayoral Academy proposals, ensure the proposed board of directors or trustees is comprised of representatives from each included city or town and is chaired by a mayor of an included city or town.

REQUIRED ATTACHMENT: résumés of proposed board members

8(D): Staffing Plans

Responses must address each of the following:

- Provide an organizational chart (graphic) for the school, and a brief narrative explaining the chart. The chart must describe the reporting structure and relationships of the school's leader, other administrators, teachers, specialists, and other staff members.
- Provide a staffing chart that includes each position and quantity of staff for each year of a five-year charter term. Be sure that the staffing chart responds to all requirements for providing services to students, including special education administration and health program duties. Note any assumptions that were made about the student population to construct this staffing plan.
- Provide an explanation of additional consideration for operational roles:
 - Oversight for transportation services
 - Oversight and facilitation of The USDA National School Lunch and Breakfast Program
 - Oversight of facility maintenance

NOTE: Please ensure that staff titles/descriptions are consistent throughout the proposal.

8(E): Leadership

Responses must address each of the following:

- Attach a job description for the school's leader even if a proposed leader has been identified. The job description must include a thorough description of the required core competencies, desired skills, expectations, and duties of the school leader.
- If the proposed school board has already selected a proposed school leader, include a résumé and a description of the recruitment and leader selection process. If the board has not yet committed to a school leader, discuss the process for recruiting and selecting a school leader.
- Provide brief job descriptions of administrators, directors, and other support personnel that comprise the administrative team (including academics, finance, operations, recruitment, parent coordinator, etc.).
- Provide information on the terms and conditions of employment and the qualifications that the employees must meet, including certification.
- Discuss the process by which other members of the school leadership team will be evaluated.

REQUIRED ATTACHMENT: school leader job description

REQUIRED ATTACHMENT: résumé of proposed school leader, if applicable.

8(F): Teachers

Strong proposals will give considerable attention to teachers, including the factors that influence and support high-quality teaching and the skills and characteristics of teachers that will be successful at the proposed school. Strong responses will draw a clear and convincing picture of how

the proposed school will support and supervise its teachers. Responses must address each of the following:

- Describe the specific qualities and characteristics that will be sought in teachers at the proposed charter school, and explain the link between the desired characteristics and the mission and educational program of the school.
- Describe a comprehensive process of teacher recruitment and selection.
- Provide information on the terms and conditions of employment and the qualifications that the employees must meet, including certification.
- Describe the teaching program of typical teachers. Indicate how many hours they will be in class and what other responsibilities they will have.
- Discuss strategies the school will employ to retain high-performing teachers.
- Describe what structures will exist within the typical school week will be implemented to provide teachers with professional development and supports.
- Explain how teachers will be evaluated, in line with the state's educator evaluation requirements found in [here](#).
- Describe how the school will support teachers, including how the school will determine the professional development needs and what opportunities will be available.
- Discuss the nature and extent of involvement of teachers in the governance and operations of the proposed school.

8(G): Management Organizations and Other Essential Partners

This subsection is designed to elicit information about comprehensive management providers or other contracted partners whose unique relationship and services to the school will be integral to the operations of the school, such that the charter school's mission, educational program, governance or management structure would fundamentally change if the relationship ended. Examples of essential partners may be charter management organizations (CMOs), school districts, or institutions of higher education. Responses must address each of the following:

- Provide the name, contact information, and general information about the organization, district, or institution with which the applicant group proposes to contract for management, support, or partner services.
 - Include a description of the organization's alignment with the school's proposed mission and model.
- Provide a detailed description of the services to be provided, including scope of services, school-specific staff role(s) to be filled, fees to be paid, methods of contract oversight and enforcement, and conditions for renewal and termination of the contract.
- Include an operating/business plan from the managing or partnering entity, which must include any additional plans the organization has to provide services to other entities or schools, and which must demonstrate its capacity to provide the contracted services with the proposed new school.
- If applicable, provide a summary of student achievement results for the other schools

managed by or partnered with the management organization.

REQUIRED ATTACHMENT: most recent audit of managing or establishing entity, as applicable.

REQUIRED ATTACHMENT: draft term sheet or contract between management/ partnering entity and proposed charter school, as applicable.

VOLUNTARY ATTACHMENT: most recent annual report of managing or partnering entity.

8(H): Family-School Partnership

RIDE expects all schools to proactively develop a robust partnership with families, to support the success of students. Responses must address each of the following:

- Provide a comprehensive explanation of how parents or guardians will be made to feel welcome at the school, and enable them to be involved in the school community.
- Describe the nature and extent of parent involvement in the governance and operations of the school.
- Discuss a set of strategies the school will employ to ensure parents are empowered and supported.
- Describe how the school will measure and respond to levels of parent and student satisfaction.

8. Organizational Capacity (Expansion Proposals)

RIDE Recommended: Responses are used to evaluate the existing school structure and its capacity to serve more students with minimal disruption to the school culture and academic outcomes.

About this section:

Charter Schools must consider the necessary strategies and potential impact for governance and personnel to ensure that they may successfully implement their educational plan. RIDE recognizes that that the organizational capacity needs differ for new charter proposals compared to expansions of existing charters. Therefore, the following section focuses specifically on charter expansion proposals. The previous section focuses on new charter proposals. For expansions, RIDE expects the impact on charter school's organizational capacity to vary based on the scale of the requested expansion.

STANDARD PROPOSALS:

Organizational capacity must:

- Describe key personnel changes (if any) that will occur as a result of the expansion and identify those changes in the attached organizational charts. Key changes must include, at minimum: the identification of the charter school's leadership team; and, if applicable, how the network-level staff will evolve over time.

MATERIAL PROPOSALS:

Organizational capacity must:

- Describe key personnel changes as a result of the expansion and identify those changes in the attached organizational charts. Key changes must include, at minimum: the identification of the charter school's leadership team; and, if applicable, how the network-level staff will evolve over time.
 - For all key personnel changes that will occur within the next five years as a result of the requested expansion, please describe the strategies the charter school will use to ensure it properly recruits, hires, and supports the newly added personnel.
- Describe and provide rationale for any changes to the charter school's governing board as a result of the requested expansion.
- As an attachment, provide the following three organizational charts: 1) organizational chart as of the current school year and in year one of the expansion; 2) organizational chart reflecting the expanded charter at the five-year mark; and 3) an organizational chart for the fully-realized expanded charter (if not fully realized in the first five years).
 - Please note: Only jobs/positions need to be identified, not specifically-named personnel.
 - For network charters with a centralized network-level staff, organizational charts must be provided at both the individual-school and network levels.

- Provide the name, contact information, and general information about any organization, district, or institution with which the school contracts with (or plans to contract with) for management, support, or partner services.
 - Provide a detailed description of the services provided, including scope of services, school-specific staff role(s) filled, fees paid, methods of contract oversight and enforcement, and conditions for renewal and termination of the contract.
- Provide a comprehensive explanation of how parents or guardians are made to feel welcome at the school, and how your school enables them to be involved in the school community.
 - Describe the nature and extent of parent involvement in the governance and operations of the school.
 - Discuss a set of strategies the school employs to ensure parents are empowered and supported.
 - Describe how the school measures and responds to levels of parent and student satisfaction.

9. Facilities

RIDE Recommended: Although facility acquisition is only required at the final approval stage, applicant teams should identify a facility, consider the questions below given the facility in question, and engage with [Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management \(RIDEM\)](#) at this stage.

About this section:

Finding a suitable facility for a new and growing charter school is a highly challenging component of new school planning. Charter schools that begin with few students and grow over time will find that they must, on the one hand, find a facility they can manage both operationally and financially, and on the other, minimize the impact of future transitions on existing students and programs. Financial and organizational health and sustainability is highly dependent on careful facilities planning.

NOTE: RIDE and the applicant will have opportunities to discuss the selection and approval of facilities for use by charter schools. RIDE reserves the right to suspend consideration for final approval if an applicant team has not presented an executed lease or purchase agreement by April of the year the proposed school is scheduled to open.

NEW CHARTER PROPOSALS:

The proposal narrative must:

- Describe the plan for and progress toward finding a facility. If applicable, describe the potential challenges of finding a suitable facility, and how you plan to overcome those challenges.
- Include a set of facilities specifications demonstrating that the applicants understand how program drives facility needs. The specifications must include characteristics relative to site location, building layout, and other building (internal) and site (external) features that would permit the school to operate smoothly and efficiently. Consider the number of core classrooms that are required, other spaces, and square footage of core instructional spaces. Responses must include the following:
 - What are the facility requirements for arrival and dismissal as it relates to bus parking?
 - What potential construction needs to happen to any facility to make it student ready and aligned to the proposed school mission and model?
 - What considerations need to be taken into account to ensure a facility can accommodate the preparation of meals or vending meals from another local education agency and/or School Food Authority? (according to the Regulations under Department of Health)
 - What considerations need to be taken into account to ensure a facility meets the needs of accommodating a food service management company?

- Describe how facility needs will be impacted by the school's enrollment plan (i.e. how enrolling more students in subsequent years will impact use of the space). If applicable, discuss the timeline by which the school would make significant capital investments, add space, or move from one space to another.
- Summarize the understanding of annual or otherwise regular updates and reports relative to compliance with facilities-related state and local laws and regulations. As this regulatory environment can be challenging and cross various local and state agencies, indicate where they may be gaps in your understanding of the regulatory environment, and how you plan to fill those gaps.
- Provide an assurance that the RIDE Office of Charter Schools will be provided with the terms and conditions for use of a facility, including draft lease or purchase agreements, once a space has been identified.
- Include a description of how the charter school board will support and oversee facilities-related issues.
- Indicate who will oversee operations and maintenance issues at the charter school.

STANDARD EXPANSION PROPOSALS:

The proposal narrative must:

- Describe if facility needs will be impacted by the charter school's requested expansion. (that is, how enrolling more students in subsequent years will impact use of space). If applicable:
 - For any changes in facilities that would need to occur by the starting school year, describe the current plan and progress towards realizing the necessary changes. If applicable, describe the potential challenges that might be faced, and strategies to overcome those challenges.
 - For any changes in facilities that would occur beyond the first school year, describe the charter school's strategic approach to realizing those changes. If applicable, describe the potential challenges that might be faced, and strategies to overcome those challenges.

MATERIAL EXPANSION PROPOSALS:

The proposal narrative must:

- Describe how facility needs will be impacted by the charter school's requested expansion (that is, how enrolling more students in subsequent years will impact use of space). If applicable, discuss the timeline by which the school would make significant capital investments, add space, or move from one space to another.

- For any changes in facilities that would need to occur by the starting school year, describe the current plan and progress towards realizing the necessary changes. If applicable, describe the potential challenges that might be faced, and strategies to overcome those challenges.
- For any changes in facilities that would occur beyond the first school year, describe the charter school's strategic approach to realizing those changes. If applicable, describe the potential challenges that might be faced, and strategies to overcome those challenges.
- Describe any additional significant operational adjustments that will be required to fulfill the requested expansion (for example, changing of the school calendar).

10. Operations

RIDE Recommended: Although specific operational plans are only required at the final approval stage, responses should consider the [rules, regulations and resources](#) relating to school health programs and school safety in the responses below.

About this section:

Charter schools are responsible for arranging and managing operational services for students. For the purposes of this proposal, “operations” is defined as the coordination and planning required to ensure that the proposed school will operate safely, and that instructional staff have the information and resources they need to perform their duties.

NEW CHARTER PROPOSALS:

The proposal narrative must:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the statutory and regulatory requirements for school health programs and school safety plans. Provide an assurance that your school will comply with these requirements.
- Describe plans for developing school safety and emergency response plans.
- Describe plans for providing health services to all students, including a plan to hire a nurse (with full consideration of the statutory requirements in the Rhode Island Rules and Regulations for School Health Programs).
- Explain the proposed school’s food service and nutrition program as it relates to staffing and facilities.
- Explain the proposed school’s plan for the transportation of students to and from the school, including logistics for arrival and dismissal. Include the following detail:
 - Process for procuring a vendor (if applicable),
 - Plans for providing transportation via Rhode Island Transportation Authority (RIPTA, applicable), and
 - Geographic area
- Explain the proposed school’s plan for human resources, payroll, and purchasing functions.
- Explain the proposed school’s plan for information technology, student information systems, and data management.

STANDARD & MATERIAL EXPANSION PROPOSALS:

The proposal narrative must:

- Describe any key changes to school operations that are a result of the proposed expansion and describe steps that will implement those changes. Or, if applicable, please describe how no operational changes will be needed as a result of the expansion.
- Explain the school's plan for the transportation of students to and from the school, including logistics for arrival and dismissal. Describe how the school's transportation plan meets the need of students.

11. Finance and Budget

RIDE Recommended: Applicant teams should inspire confidence in their ability build a fund balance that is at least positive 1% and meet the overall annual expectations in the [Charter Performance Framework Financial Indicator](#).

About this section:

Proposals must include a five-year budget projection for the proposed charter school. A template for the budget, the Rhode Island Charter School Budget Projection Workbook, is available on [RIDE Charter Schools Webpage](#). Please note to use either the new charter proposal or expansion proposal versions based on your proposal type.

In addition to the budget projection, applicants must craft a narrative section that justifies the assumptions in the budget projection, and explain how all funds will be managed. Applicants must include in the narrative plans to meet the expectations of the [Charter School Performance Framework Financial Indicator](#), specifically, current ratio, unrestricted days of cash and debt to asset ratio. If financial plans include the charter not able to meet expectations on each criteria in the first year, applicants must incorporate in their responses how and by what fiscal year the proposed budgets will meet the expectations of the financial indicator.

NEW CHARTER PROPOSALS:

The proposal narrative must:

- Provide an overall plan for financial management that includes:
 - A complete and realistic five-year budget projection that appropriately reflects the expenses related to all commitments in the proposal, and indicates that the school can sustain over the five-year charter term and beyond, and meet the expectations of the financial indicator in the charter performance framework.
 - Assurances that the school will comply with reporting to the Office of Municipal Affairs and State Auditor General under RIGL 16-77.2-8; 16-77.3-8; 16-77.4-8
 - Assurances that the school board will annually seek and approve an operational budget and cash flow statement, with a copy to RIDE.
 - Assurances that the school will complete a fiscal audit each year with an independent firm, with a copy to RIDE.
- Provide a narrative that addresses:
 - A justification of the costs and assumptions made in the budget projection. Included in the five-year budget narrative must be a description of the sources of revenue and expenses for the school's facility, including lease/ debt service as well as estimated operations/maintenance costs, indicating that facilities expenses will not overly burden or strain school operations. Strong proposals will provide confidence in the school team's ability to sustain a budget that builds a fund balance that at least positive each quarter, relative to anticipated private funding streams.

- Provide a description of the management and oversight of finances at the school, including any staff positions for this purpose and their duties.

REQUIRED ATTACHMENT: five-year budget projection.

STANDARD & MATERIAL EXPANSION PROPOSALS:

The proposal narrative must:

- Provide a complete and realistic five-year budget projection – starting with the first school year – that appropriately reflects the expenses related to the charter school, taking into account the requested expansion.
- Provide a budget narrative that thoroughly justifies the costs and assumptions made in the budget projection. The narrative must provide further focus on any specific changes to the budget that will occur as a result of the requested expansion.

In addition, as applicable, Requests for Expansion must:

- Describe the causes that led to and the current status of:
 - Any areas of the financial performance indicator that are not being met
 - Any compliance violations that have led to authorizer intervention
 - Any litigation involving your charter school; and
 - Any material audit findings for your charter school

REQUIRED ATTACHMENT: five-year budget projection.

12. Schedule & Calendar (New Charter Proposals Only)

RIDE Recommended: Reference [Regulations Governing School Calendar and Length of School Day](#)

About this section:

Applicants must provide draft schedules for students and teachers, and an annual calendar for the proposed school's first year of operation. The structures in schedule and calendar must account for the statutory requirement to provide appropriate hours/days of instruction, and must tie back to the program plans described in Section VII: Educational Program.

In proposing a school schedule and calendar for the first year of operation, reviewers must have a sense of the breadth of opportunities available for students, both inside and outside of the typical school day.

Proposals are required to:

- Provide a draft daily schedule and narrative that describes the length of each school day, including how much time will be offered for various components of the educational program and clearly aligns with the needs of students and the mission and educational program of the school.
- Provide a draft weekly schedule and narrative that describes how the educational program is rolled out over a typical week. Include before or after-school opportunities for electives, intervention, remediation, tutoring, and extracurricular activities as applicable. Attach a draft school calendar that includes:
 - Total days of instruction for the school year
 - First and last day of classes
 - Organization of the school year (e.g. trimesters, semesters)
 - All planned holidays/ days off
 - Dates for professional development, special days scheduled for mission-specific requirements (e.g. portfolio demonstrations, college days, science fairs etc.)
 - Dates for extended or summer programs, if applicable.

Provide a draft schedule of a teachers' work week including:

- Time devoted to core teaching
- Time devoted to planning
- Time devoted to professional development
- Time devoted to other activities that may be unique to the proposed school's mission or culture

REQUIRED ATTACHMENT: Draft school calendar

13. Startup Timeline (New Charter Proposals Only)

RIDE Recommended: Applicant teams should contact the Rhode Island Charter Team at RICharters@ride.ri.gov to request the most recent version of the “Pre-Opening Checklist” that indicates all the steps necessary for school launch.

About this section:

Provide a timeline for the school startup period, dating from the anticipated point of preliminary approval through the date of school opening.

NEW CHARTER PROPOSALS – REQUIRED INFORMATION:

The startup timeline must:

- Outline a plan that includes the steps necessary for a successful school launch, and ensures that schools meet the regulatory requirements for readiness by the point of final approval.
- Align with all planning activities discussed throughout the proposal.
- Name a point person accountable for actions on the timeline.
- Include any supplemental information that may be applicable.

14. Variances

RIDE Recommended: Reference [RIGL § 16-77.2-3\(g\)](#), [§ 16-77.3-3\(g\)](#) and [§ 16-77.4-3\(g\)](#) and the [Charter School Regulations \(200-RICR-20-05-2\), Section 2.10](#)

About this section:

To the extent allowable in state law, applicants are permitted to request variances from statutes or regulations that may inhibit operation of the proposed charter school. Statutory provisions that may not be waived are itemized in statutes specific to district charter, independent charter, and mayoral academies.

Applicants are encouraged to review the relevant law and regulations and reach out to the Charter School Office with any questions. As approval by the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education is required for a variance, applicants are encouraged to thoroughly consider variance needs in this section. Approval of the variance is not guaranteed and the applicant group should be prepared with contingency plans should the variance not be approved.

Variances must:

- Identify the state statutes and/or regulations from which variances are sought in order to facilitate operation of the proposed charter school.
- Explain the purpose of each variance, and the alternative method by which the concern that gave rise to the law or regulation will be addressed.
- FOR DISTRICT CHARTER SCHOOLS ONLY: If any, include which provisions of the collective bargaining agreement will not be applicable to the district charter school. As any provisions included herein are subject to agreement by the parties to the collective bargaining agreement, also include a letter of support from any and each party to the agreement acknowledging support.

15. Charter School Program Grant Intent to Apply

RIDE Recommended: Reference Appendix D for more information.

About this section:

Applicants with intent to request Charter School Program subgrant funding must provide a one-page executive summary that details:

- proposed charter school's needs during the planning and implementation periods (prompt below).
- proposed activities and outcomes.

Do not include information that is not included/supported elsewhere in the application. Within this 1-page summary, applicants must include a statement of need, which explains:

- The mission of the proposed school and the target population of students to be served.
- Justifies the need for support from the CSP startup grant, and how it will address the mission of the school and the needs of students.
- Discuss the proposed school's needs and priorities in preparation for opening its doors to students.

NOTE: RIDE will provide the updated CSP subgrant application post-preliminary approval.

Appendix A: Required Proposal Narrative Attachments

NEW CHARTER PROPOSALS – REQUIRED INFORMATION:

- Résumés of each member of applicant group
- Résumés of prospective Board members
- Table with a list of board positions, individuals, and roles as described above
- Draft bylaws
- School leader job description
- An enrollment table that includes a five-year enrollment projection and a year by year growth plan extending to the year the charter is fully grown
- Outline of the course of study/ course offerings at the school
- Most recent audit of establishing entity (for Independent Charter Proposals, per RIGL 16-77.3-2(b))
- Draft term sheet or contract with managing/partnering entity (if applicable)
- Draft school calendar
- Five-year budget projection
- Evidence of community support
- Any additional documentation required as outlined in Appendix B

STANDARD EXPANSION PROPOSALS – REQUIRED INFORMATION:

- An enrollment table that includes a five-year enrollment projection and a year by year growth plan extending to the year the charter is fully grown
- Evidence of community support
- Five-year budget projection

MATERIAL EXPANSION PROPOSALS – REQUIRED INFORMATION:

- An enrollment table that includes a five-year enrollment projection and a year by year growth plan extending to the year the charter is fully grown
- Organizational charts:
 - For the current school year and year one of the expansion
 - For the expanded charter at the five-year mark
 - For the fully-realized expanded charter if not realized within the first five years
- Five-year budget projection
- Evidence of community support
- Any additional documentation required as outlined in Appendix B

Appendix B: Additional Charter Type Proposal Requirements

NEW CHARTER PROPOSALS:

District Charter Schools

Per [RIGL § 16-77.2-2\(b\)](#) if the proposed charter school is a conversion of a district school into a district charter school, the applicant must:

- Provide evidence of affirmative votes from two-thirds of the teachers assigned to the school;
- Provide evidence that the applicant team can receive the affirmative votes of parents or legal guardians representing a majority of all the students in the school.

Per [RIGL § 16-77.2-2\(c\)](#) if the proposed school is a new district charter school, the applicant must:

- Provide evidence of affirmative support of the number of certified teachers employed within the school district where the district charter school is to be located at least equal to two-thirds of the number of teachers that will be required to staff the proposed district charter school. The teachers who support the proposed charter must state their desire to transfer to the district charter school, once established, and to teach under the terms of the charter.
- Provide evidence that the proposed charter has affirmative support of parents or legal guardians representing a number of students currently enrolled in the school district equal to at least one-half (1/2) of the number of students who would be needed to attend the proposed district charter school. The parents or guardians must state their desire to have their children transfer to the district charter school, once established, and to be educated under the terms of the charter.

Independent Charter Schools

- If the proposed school is an independent charter school, the applicant must: submit its financial records and financial plan for review by the auditor general as prescribed by [RIGL 16-77.3-2\(b\)](#).
- If proposing a network charter, provide official written support by the town or city Councils from sending districts (as required by [RIGL § 16-77-5.1.c](#)). If official written support is not available, the applicant must explain why official written support is not available and provide a plan for obtaining written support by the anticipated date of preliminary approval. If official written support is not available, per 16-77-5.1 (f), a proposed charter, or amendment to a charter for expansion, may proceed through the approval process by removing districts that have not provided written support from the catchment area and may be approved with the remaining districts in the catchment area

Mayoral Academies

- If proposing a network charter, provide official written support by the town or city Councils from sending districts (as required by [RIGL § 16-77-5.1.c](#)). If official written support is not available, the applicant must explain why official written support is not available and provide a plan for obtaining written support by the anticipated date of preliminary approval. If official written support is not available, per 16-77-5.1 (f), a proposed charter, or amendment to a charter for expansion, may proceed through the approval process by removing districts that have not provided written support from the catchment area and may be approved with the

remaining districts in the catchment area.

- Per RIGL § [16-77.4-1\(a\)](#), mayoral academy proposals must have approval from each city or town of the charter's enrolling communities (catchment area) regarding the participation of each respective city or town in the proposal. Further, the mayoral academy must have a board of directors or trustees comprised of representatives from each included city or town and is chaired by a mayor of an included city or town. Approval must be from each mayor or in the absence of a mayor, the city or town Council via a resolution or ordinance. If a mayor does not provide written support for the proposal, then the proposal may proceed through the approval process by removing the respective district from the catchment area.

STANDARD & MATERIAL EXPANSION PROPOSALS (MAYORAL ACADEMIES ONLY):

Proposed mayoral academy expansions must have approval from each city or town of the charter's enrolling communities (catchment area) regarding the participation of each respective city or town in the proposed expansion. Approval must be from each mayor or in the absence of a mayor, the city or town Council via a resolution or ordinance. If a mayor does not provide written support for the expansion, then the proposed expansion may proceed through the approval process by removing the respective district from the expansion's catchment area.

Appendix C: Definition of Terms

The following terms are used frequently in this proposal document. Definitions (as defined by RIDE and Rhode Island regulations) are below.

1. **New Charter Proposal:** A request for a new charter resulting in a brand new charter.
2. **Expansion:** An expansion is understood to be: 1) an increase in total enrollment; 2) an increase in the grade levels previously authorized in the original charter; or 3) the addition of a school district to the catchment area. An approved request for expansion will result in an amendment to the existing charter.
3. **Standard Expansion Proposal:** A proposal for expansion in total enrollment for an existing charter, less than both 25% of current enrollment and 100 students, with no material changes to the charters' grade levels, enrollment catchment area, nor the addition of a new school to the charter. Schools approved for standard expansions are not eligible to apply for Charter School Program Funding.
4. **Material Expansion Proposal:** A proposal for an expansion for an existing charter that will result in any of the following: a) an increase of enrollment at least 25% of current enrollment or 100 students; b) changes to the charter's grade levels; c) changes to the charter's enrollment catchment area; and/or, d) the addition of at least one new school. Schools approved for material expansions resulting in new charter seats qualify to apply for Charter School Program Funding if the school meets eligibility criteria (see Appendix D) and the definition of a high quality charter school.
5. **Network Charter School:** A charter public school will be considered a network charter school if it intends to include both elementary and secondary schools or multiple elementary and/or multiple secondary schools. "Multiple elementary or secondary schools" means that the schools operate independently from one another with individual school budgets and school administrators (such as a school principal). The schools could be co-located; however, the schools run a separate lottery and enrollment process and would receive distinct school codes for statewide data reporting.
6. **High-Quality Charter School:** (Definition included in section 4311(8) of the ESSA) A Charter school that---
 - a. shows evidence of strong academic results, which may include strong student academic growth, as determined by a State (Evidence of strong academic results as defined RIDE, includes a proven track record of success. See definition of "proven track record of success");
 - b. has no significant issues in the areas of student safety, financial and operational management, or statutory or regulatory compliance;

- c. has demonstrated success in significantly increasing student academic achievement, including graduation rates where applicable, for all students served by the charter school; and
 - d. has demonstrated success in increasing student academic achievement, including graduation rates where applicable, for each of the subgroups of students, as defined in section 1111(c)(2), except that such demonstration is not required in a case in which the number of students in a group is insufficient to yield statistically reliable information or the results would reveal personally identifiable information about an individual student.
7. ***Proven track record of success:*** Evidence of strong academic results as defined by the Rhode Island Department of Education includes a proven track record of success. RIDE will review all available data to evaluate whether not a charter has a clear track record of success. This evidence will definitively include an analysis of the charter's performance on the statewide accountability system. A clear track record must not include any significant deficiencies in student performance on the statewide accountability or charter school performance review systems. In addition, charters may provide additional evidence of performance against internal assessment data or other reliable measures. While RIDE will review all available data in evaluating a school's track record, RIDE will heavily consider the most recent year of student achievement data as the clearest indicator of a school's current ability to provide future quality educational opportunities.
8. ***Written Support:*** "Written support" means a resolution or ordinance granted by the town or city Council for each proposed sending district where the Council considers the fiscal and educational welfare of the municipality and students after at least one public hearing.

Appendix D: Charter School Program Grant Information

Description of Grant Program

The purpose of the US Department of Education's Charter Schools Program (CSP) is to increase the national understanding of the charter school model by: (1) expanding the number of high-quality charter schools available to students across the Nation by providing financial assistance for the planning, program design, and initial implementation of charter schools; and (2) by evaluating the effects of charter schools, including their effects on students, student academic achievement, staff and parents.

In September 2017, the Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) was awarded a State Education Agency (SEA) CSP grant which enables to award subgrants to eligible applicants in their State to open and prepare for the operation of new charter schools and to replicate and expand high-quality charter schools. The Rhode Island Charter Schools Program Grant's primary goal is to increase the number of high-quality educational opportunities for Rhode Island's educationally disadvantaged students. Through this grant, Rhode Island manages start up grant competitions for qualified applicants to support planning and implementation costs.

CSP grants awarded by RIDE are federally funded under the US Department of Education Charter Schools Program, Expanding Opportunities Through Quality Charter Schools Program Grants to State Entities (CFDA number 84.282A). Awards are subject to the availability of funds through the CSP. Additional federal guidance and related documents can be found at: <https://www2.ed.gov/programs/charter-rehqcs/index.html>

CSP Startup Grants

CSP startup grants are competitive grants for the purpose of funding startup activities, including planning and implementation and costs. Applicants must apply for all startup funding as a part of this grant. Grant awards may last up to three total years inclusive of planning and implementation periods. The planning period for successful applicants will begin on the date that a satisfactory application was received by RIDE (as long as it met the submission deadline). The planning period ends June 30th of the fiscal year prior to the fiscal school year in which the schools intends to open (i.e. For schools opening in 2021-22, the planning period ends on June 30, 2021). The implementation period begins July 1 of the school year in which the charter intends to open, and only after a school receives final approval from the Council of Elementary and Secondary Education (the Council). The implementation period may extend through the school's first two years of operation.

Grant Activities

Planning activities eligible for grant funding occur during the year prior to a proposed new charter

school opening. Depending on the specifics of a charter school’s unique situation, the planning period may range from six to a maximum of 18 months. A charter may only be eligible for planning funds *after* the proposed charter school receives from the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education (the Council) either preliminary approval (in the case of a new charter school proposal) or approval for an expansion of a new school (in the case of an existing charter’s expansion proposal). Please see section 1.3 Eligibility to Apply for more details.

Implementation activities eligible for grant funding may overlap with the planning period. However, for new charter schools, implementation funds are contingent upon applicants receiving final approval from the Council. If the new proposal receives a CSP subgrant award, but does not receive final approval to open from the Council, the applicant will forfeit the remainder of the total award.

Planning grant funds are designed to assist founding teams with staff/board development, academic program development, and other planning activities. Implementation funds can be used to purchase supplies and equipment, and provide resources for additional planning and program development. More information on allowable activities under implementation grants can be found in Sections 1.4 and 1.5 of these *Guidelines*.

Award Sizes

All fully satisfactory applications will be met with an \$800,000 award, contingent on the quality of the proposed project and project goals, the justification and clarify of the budget request, and the availability of funds. Applicants may choose the distribution of their total budget across their grant period. However, planning funds are not to exceed \$400,000 unless there is a significant rationale presented to cover expenses during the planning year.

	PLANNING FUNDS	IMPLEMENTATION FUNDS
<i>Examples of Uses</i>	Staff/ board development; academic program development; development of assessments; development of board and school policies; development of information and reporting systems	Supplies and equipment; staff/ board development; academic program development; additional planning
<i>Average Size</i>	<p>Average award of \$400,000 over 6-18 month period</p> <p><i>(not to exceed 36 months when combined with Implementation Period, not to exceed \$800K in total when combined with implementation)</i></p>	<p>Average grant award of \$400,000 through the first two years of operation</p> <p><i>(not to exceed 36 months when combined with Planning Period, not to exceed \$800,000 in total when combined with planning)</i></p>

Open date	Date satisfactory application is received by RIDE.	Date satisfactory application is approved by RIDE (For new school proposals, after schools receive final approval from RI K-12 Council)
Close date	June 30th of the fiscal year prior to the fiscal school year in which the schools intends to open	June 30 of the second year of the school's operation

Eligibility to Apply

To be eligible to apply for startup funding through the Rhode Island CSP grant, applicants must be either:

- 1) Proposed new charter schools that have received preliminary approval from the Council. Implementation funds will only be eligible for reimbursement after applicants receiving final approval from the Council.
- 2) An existing charter that received approval to expand from the Council. Expanding existing charters must be applying for startup funds to support a material expansion as defined in the New Seats

If a charter school uses or is planning to use any weighted lottery, in order to be eligible, the weighted lottery must be approved by RIDE to ensure it meets state law and regulation as well as the parameters of section 4303(c)(3) of the ESEA . Any charter school receiving CSP grant funds may only use a weighted lottery to give slightly better chances for admission to educationally disadvantaged students.

The charter applying must not have received a Charter School Program startup grant in the past for the same activities. If a charter previously received a Charter School Program startup grant and meets the definition of a high-quality charter school (in accordance with the definition in section 4310(8) of the ESEA) they could be eligible to apply for a replication or expansion grant.

NOTE: Any funds awarded must remain under the care and control of the Board of Directors of the charter school that applied for and was awarded the grant. Each grantee's project must be designed and implemented in conformance with all applicable state and federal regulations.

Allowable Activities

In accordance with Title IV, Part C of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), Section 4301 – 4311 (20 U.S.C. 7221-7221j), specifically Section 4303, Grants to Support High-Quality Charter Schools, there are expanded flexibilities for allowable activities than under previous CSP competitions.

Subgrants can be for opening and preparing for the operation of:

- a. New charter schools;
- b. Replicated high-quality charter schools; or
- c. Expanding high-quality charter schools.

In Accordance with subsection 4303(h) Subgrants must support activities related to opening and preparing for the operation of new charter schools or replicating or expanding high-quality charter schools, this can include:

- a. Costs associated with preparing teachers, school leaders, and specialized instructional support personnel
 - i. Professional development,
 - ii. Hiring and compensating during planning period – teachers, school leaders, and/or specialized instructional support personnel.
- b. Acquiring supplies, training, equipment (including technology), and educational materials (including developing and acquiring instructional materials).
- c. Carrying out necessary renovations to ensure that a new school building complies with applicable statutes and regulations, and minor facilities repairs (excluding construction).
- d. Providing one-time, startup costs associated with providing transportation to students to and from the charter school.
- e. Carrying out community engagement activities, which may include paying the cost of student and staff recruitment.
- f. Providing for other appropriate, non-sustained costs related to the activities in opening and preparing for the operation of charter schools.

Additionally information can be found in the Charter Schools Program Nonregulatory Guidance (updated January 2014) <https://www2.ed.gov/programs/charter-rehqcs/legislation.html>

Grant Parameters

All CSP subgrantees are expected to complete the goals and objectives, complete all activities, and adhere to the budget described in the approved grant applicant. Failure to do so may result in the rejection of grant reimbursement requests and the withdrawal by the Rhode Island Department of Education of the charter school's eligibility for additional grant funding through the CSP. RIDE reserves the right to remove ineligible or undocumented costs from funding consideration and reimbursement requests.

CSP funds shall be used to supplement, and not supplant, state, local or other funds providing for the planning and operations of charter schools. Recurring operational expenses, such as teacher or administrator salaries, are not allowable under the charter schools program (CSP).

Applications will be subject to a full programmatic and fiscal review by RIDE. Applications including activities that are not allowable may be rejected. General guidance regarding allowable expenses for federal grant funds may be found within Uniform Guidance (2 CFR §200.403 – 200.409). It is located on the [Electronic Code of Federal locations](#).

Applicants to the RI CSP subgrant competition must specify whether planned activities and costs are associated with either the planning period or the implementation period of their grant proposals. Subgrant applicants must organize their application to demonstrate how their grant will support Rhode Island CSP Objectives including:

- Increasing the number of high-quality educational opportunities for Rhode Island's Educationally Disadvantaged Students and
- Fostering partnerships among Rhode Island's charter public schools and traditional school districts to raise achievement for all students in Rhode Island, particularly for educationally disadvantaged students.

Reimbursement Requests

For any planning activities approved as part of an award for this competition, funds must be completely drawn down and all reimbursement requests submitted no later than 11:59PM on June 30th of the fiscal year prior to the fiscal school year in which the school intends to open. (i.e. for a school opening in the fall of 2021, the planning period ends June 30, 2021).

For any implementation activities, funds must be completely drawn down and all reimbursement requests submitted no later than 11:59PM on June 30th of the second year of the school's operation. For implementation activities for new charter schools, no grant funds may be reimbursed until a proposed school has received final approval from the RI Council on K-12 Education. In the event that a new charter school receives preliminary approval to open by the Council and is awarded a startup grant, but does not receive final approval to open by the Council. The charter school will be unable to file for reimbursement of costs beyond the date of notification that final approval will not be granted.

Any expenditure incurred after these dates will not be reimbursed. Any reimbursement requests received after these dates will not be reimbursed.

Appendix E: RIDE Guidance for School Specific Goals

This document serves as guidance to Rhode Island charters for creating their school-specific goals. The information provided below has been created by RIDE for charter schools, relying on guidance given by the National Association of Charter Schools and from *Making the Mission Matter* by Margaret Lin of the Center for Charter Schools of Central Michigan University. **All school-specific goals must be submitted using the form provided.**

ABOUT SCHOOL-SPECIFIC GOALS

School-specific goals are set by each charter as an additional way to capture progress and determine if a school is achieving its fundamental purpose as laid out in its mission. School-specific goals are an optional component of the Rhode Island Charter Performance Review System. If a charter chooses to create school-specific goals, RIDE suggests creating two to three academic goals and two to three organizational goals.

Academic school-specific goals will be evaluated in the Charter Performance Review System in the Primary Indicator: Academic Performance. The School Performance indicator, criterion 1.A.2, measures school-specific goals. Organizational school-specific goals will be evaluated in the Charter Performance Review System in Sustainability Indicator 2: Organizational Performance, criterion 2.1. Please reference the Charter Performance Review System Handbook for additional information on the indicators and their corresponding criteria.

SCHOOL-SPECIFIC GOAL CRITERIA

In accordance with Charter School Regulations Section 2.2.4(B)(8), a final charter includes an accountability plan comprised of student academic and organizational performance goals developed by the charter school and related to the charter's mission. School-specific goals must **not** be redundant to the Charter Performance Review System. RIDE encourages charters to begin by examining the mission statement and key educational program elements of the charter. Charters with already adopted board strategic plans may be able to align the goals of their strategic plan to school-specific goals. The key elements of each charter's mission must serve as a starting point for creating goals.

Based on national best practices for goal-setting, each school-specific goal must meet the criteria of being a **SMART** goal:

SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-Based) is a nationally used framework for creating school-specific goals. Goals must follow the SMART framework to be RIDE-approved. The criteria for SMART goals are as follows:

Specific

Goals must be clearly stated and easily understood. Academic goals need to be tied to student learning specifying what students must be able to do. Organizational goals must clearly state the charters desired

outcome. Goals must be very clear about what data will be gathered and what constitutes meeting (or not meeting) the goal.

Measurable

Data source(s) for measuring each goal must be clearly identified and tied to quantifiable results. These sources must be reliable and credible, using data that can be externally validated by an entity outside of the school if needed. Examples of data that can be validated by an external source are provided in Appendix B.

Ambitious & Achievable

Goals must be both ambitious and achievable, resulting in a substantial impact for the charter's students. Goal setting must start with examining students' baseline achievement levels or current organizational data.

Relevant

Goals must be reflective of the charter's mission, values and aspirations.

Time based

A time frame is necessary to be able to examine achievement. Charters must set annual goals as well as comprehensive goals for their current Charter term.

In addition, each school-specific goal must meet the additional following criteria:

- ✓ Goals are related directly to Charter Mission.
- ✓ Goals are not redundant to outcomes measured in other parts of the Charter Performance Review System.
- ✓ Goals use credible data and can be externally validated by an outside source. (See Appendices A and B)
- ✓ Goals include measures, benchmarks and annual targets.
- ✓ Goals are in the provided table format.
- ✓ Goals are approved by the charter's board of trustees.
- ✓ Goals are outcomes-based.

FURTHER GUIDANCE FOR SCHOOL-SPECIFIC GOALS

Academic goals are measurable academic outcomes of student learning. They must focus on outcomes and evidence of learning and not inputs. They can extend to other areas beyond those academic aspects evaluated solely by standardized and mandated tests. For example, goals could be related to arts education, character development or service learning, while relating directly to the school's mission.

Organizational goals consider the management, governance, or operational performance of the school as they relate to the charter mission. For example, goals can address teacher advancement, staff diversity, or institutional events, while relating directly back to the mission.

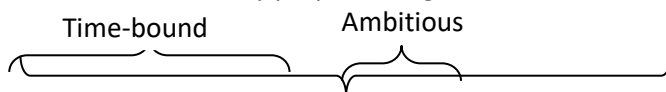
Breaking Down the Components of Goals:

To assist charters in completing the Goal Setting Form on page 4, below is an example of goal and its elements.

Element	Description	Example
Goal	Broad statement about what the charter or school is trying to accomplish.	"All students who have attended the school for at least three years will demonstrate broad knowledge of Biology."
Measure	The data source or means to assess performance of toward the goal.	"The <u>percentage of students</u> who have attended the school for at least three years who achieve a 3, 4 or 5 on the Advanced Placement Biology exam."
Targets	The specific objective and/or annual target for the identified measure in order to meet the goal. A benchmark, or baseline, must be identified in order to build annual targets.	<u>At least 90% of students</u> who have attended the school for at least three years will achieve a 3, 4 or 5 on the Advanced Placement Biology exam."

Examples: The following examples illustrate SMART goals.

1. Mission: Charter School Academy prepares all graduates to succeed in college.



Sample Goal: *By the time they graduate, all students will have the skills and knowledge to succeed in competitive, four-year colleges, as measured by Advanced Placement exams and the SAT.*

Specific and Relevant Measurable

2. Mission: Chinese Immersion Charter School will prepare student for success in high school and as future citizens in a globalized economy.

Sample Goal: *By the end of grade 6, students will demonstrate grade-appropriate proficiency on the Chinese National Online Early Language Learning Assessment (NOELLA).*

SCHOOL-SPECIFIC GOAL SETTING FORM

Charters must use the form below as a template for setting school-specific goals.

CHARTER NAME:	SCHOOL NAME:
CHARTER MISSION:	

GOAL:					Select Goal Type <input type="checkbox"/> Organizational <input type="checkbox"/> Academic
<i>Explain how this goal is aligned to the charter's mission? Why is the identified goal both ambitious and achievable?</i>					
MEASURE:					
<i>Explain why this measure is an appropriate tool for evaluating the outcome of the goal. Explain why the data source is credible and how it can be externally validated.</i>					
BENCHMARK YEAR	YEAR 1 TARGET	YEAR 2 TARGET	YEAR 3 TARGET	YEAR 4 TARGET	YEAR 5 TARGET

*Note: Targets can be incremental. Targets can also be the same each year. Either way, please be sure to include the goal's target for each year, as illustrated above.

EXAMPLES OF MEASURES AND TARGETS

Measures must be credible and designed to minimize bias to ensure students and faculty are held to the highest expectations.

If a charter chooses to use an assessment as a measure, the assessment must be valid.

This means that the assessment has been shown by research to **measure the skills or knowledge that it intends to measure**. Researchers validate an assessment by reviewing its content, observing the processes by which students answer the questions, and evaluating whether external factors introduce bias into the testing results¹.

Validity also means that **the measure is appropriate for the purposes for which it is used**. For example, the results of a diagnostic reading test are valid for understanding which reading skills the student has not yet mastered. They may not be valid, however, for determining the student's overall reading proficiency.²

Academic Performance	Organizational
Reaching X proficiency of mission-related target demographic	Teacher retention rate
Proficiency or scores on PSAT/SAT or AP exams (% of student body)	Participation in school activities (field trip, parents days, volunteering)
College enrollment (% of student body)	Leadership retention rates
College remediation (% of student body)	Teacher ratings on classroom observation/evaluation tool
College persistence (% of student body)	Participation in parent-teacher conferences
Proficiency of non-tested subjects by assessment (Foreign Language, Writing, Grades K-3)	Student participation in school-related activities

¹ Foundations of Psychological Testing: A Practical Approach. By Robert L. Lovler, Leslie A. Miller, Sandra A. McIntire. P189

² IBID. p. 188

DATA SOURCES

Systems for gathering data must be able to be externally validated. The following appendix explains how to apply this principle. Some academic and most organizational goals will be based on internally gathered data. In order to include goals based on this data in an accountability plan, the system used to collect relevant data must be transparent and the data must be collected and recorded consistently. The appropriate system for tracking information will vary for different goals.

Data sources for measures must use a transparent and consistent data collection system. Upon reviewing the goal submission, RIDE may follow up for additional documentation or description of the data collection system (including relevant instruments like spreadsheets or surveys) to ensure the goal and its measures are credible.

Example: A school that prioritizes the creation of a safe learning environment wants to demonstrate that students feel safe and secure while they are at school. The school decides to administer a survey to let students anonymously report whether they have experienced bullying. It chooses the Olweus Bullying Survey, a research-tested survey designed to assess school climate and bullying. The school sets the measure: "1% or fewer students will report being bullied each year, according to the definition contained in the Olweus Bullying Survey."

The school ensures its data sources are able to be externally validated by keeping all survey data in a binder that is organized by year. Each year contains a cover sheet with the following information: number of surveys distributed, date they were distributed, person in charge of distribution, number completed. Behind this tab are the surveys themselves, with a printout of the spreadsheet where the results were tallied. A reviewer could easily review the surveys, ask the sender questions about methodology, and understand the return rate.

Appendix F: Proposal Checklist

Application Section	New Charter Proposal	Material Expansion Proposal	Standard Expansion Proposal
1. Cover Sheet	√	√	√
2. Executive Summary	√	√	√
3. Mission Statement	√	√	-
4. Proposed New Student Seats and Enrollment	√	√	√
5. Goals	√	√	√
6. Community Need and Support	√	√	√
7. Educational Program	√	√	√
8. Organizational Capacity	√	√	√
9. Facilities	√	√	√
10. Operations	√	√	√
11. Finance and Budget	√	√	√
12. Schedule and Calendar	√	-	-
13. Startup Timeline	√	-	-
14. Variances	√	√	√
15. CSP Grant Intent to Apply	√	√	-